THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

Stated and Set in Scripture Light

Prepared for the Celebration of
Prisoners of Christ of the Philippines
(POCOP)

Baguio City, Philippines
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THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

Stated and Set in Scripture Light

Leading to the doctrine of Providence

In Opposition to Mr. John Wesley and the Arminian Objections to the Canons of Dort (1618–1619)

By **John Gill**

Narrated and Prepared by **David Clarke**

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This work presents the theological arguments of John Gill concerning the doctrine of predestination and Providenceand addresses objections raised by John Wesley and Arminian writers following the Synod of Dort (1618–1619).

DEDICATION

Prepared for the students, pastors, and teachers of **Baguio Christ-Centred Churches (BCCC)** Philippines and for the brethren of **Prisoners of Christ of the Philippines (POCOP).**

May the study of the Holy Scriptures and the doctrines of grace strengthen the faith of those who teach, preach, and study the Word of God.

PREFACE

This work presents the doctrine of predestination as set forth in the Holy Scriptures and as carefully articulated by the eminent theologian Dr. John Gill. It is written in response to objections raised by John Wesley and others who opposed the conclusions of the Synod of Dort (1618–1619) and the historic Reformed understanding of divine sovereignty.

The purpose of this book is not merely to engage in controversy but to clarify the biblical teaching concerning the eternal decrees of God. The doctrine of predestination has often been misunderstood or misrepresented, sometimes through careless language and sometimes through philosophical speculation that goes beyond the testimony of Scripture.

Dr. Gill sought to ground the discussion firmly upon the authority of the Word of God. In doing so he demonstrated that the doctrines of election, predestination, and perseverance are not speculative ideas but truths plainly revealed in the Scriptures.
The reader is encouraged to examine the passages of Scripture cited throughout this work and to consider the arguments carefully. May the study of these doctrines lead to a deeper reverence for the sovereignty, wisdom, justice, and grace of God.

INTRODUCTION

The doctrine of predestination has long been a subject of serious discussion within the Christian church. While some have regarded it with suspicion or misunderstanding, others have recognized it as a necessary consequence of the sovereignty of God as revealed in the Scriptures.

Predestination concerns the eternal purpose of God in relation to all things and especially in relation to the salvation of His people. The Scriptures affirm that God works all things according to the counsel of His will and that the redemption accomplished through Jesus Christ was determined before the foundation of the world.

This work examines the doctrine of predestination under several headings: the general decree of God concerning all events, the special decree concerning salvation, and the principal objections raised against these teachings. The aim is to defend the truth of God's Word and to demonstrate that the doctrine of predestination magnifies the glory of God and the riches of His grace.

PUBLISHERS NOTE

There are words used in the Authorized Version of the Scriptures that have precise meaning and help clarify the doctrines of grace. Many modern versions of the Bible and those versions published since 1945, based upon the unsound principles of Westcott and Hort, such as the New International Version, have dropped these classical theological words.

We should understand the meaning of the words used in scripture such as:
Justification, Redemption, Regeneration, Providence,Quickening
Sanctification, Conversion, Predestination, Election, Adoption
Foreordination, Foreknowledge, Preterition, Damnation, Reprobation

These words are necessary for discussing the doctrines of the Bible

and we should be aware of how they are used in modern versions of the Bible. A helpful approach is to make a list of these words and understand their meaning before examining the doctrine discussed in this paper. See the word list at the end of this paper.

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THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION
Stated and Set in Scripture Light

PREDESTINATION WITH RESPECT TO MEN, TO LIFE AND UNTO DEATH

Predestination, as it respects men, is that eternal decree of God whereby he has determined the everlasting state of men. The Scriptures chiefly treat of this doctrine under two branches: **Election** and **Reprobation**. The one is a predestination unto life; the other unto death.

I. ELECTION

Election, which is a predestination unto life, is an act of the free grace of God, flowing from his sovereign and immutable will. By this act, from all eternity, God has chosen in Christ, out of the common mass of mankind, certain persons to partake of spiritual blessings in this life and eternal happiness in the life to come, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

1. THE OBJECTS OF ELECTION

The objects of election are some men, not all, which a choice necessarily implies. To choose all would be no choice at all. Therefore the Scripture speaks of:

"A remnant according to the election of grace."
— Romans 11:5 (KJV)

These are a certain number who, though unknown to us, are perfectly known to God.

"The Lord knoweth them that are his."
— 2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV)

Though they are in themselves a great multitude which no man can number (Revelation 7:9), yet when compared with the whole mass of mankind they are but few.

"Many be called, but few chosen."

— Matthew 20:16 (KJV)

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"
— Romans 9:21 (KJV)

Election therefore respects particular persons, not whole nations or communities.

"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."
— Romans 9:13 (KJV)

2. ELECTION AN ACT OF FREE GRACE

Election is entirely an act of God's free grace and is not moved by any foreseen merit, work, or condition in the creature.

"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.
And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace."
— Romans 11:5–6 (KJV)

Election therefore proceeds according to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."
— Ephesians 1:5 (KJV)

3. ELECTION IRRESPECTIVE OF FAITH OR WORKS

Faith itself flows from election.

"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."
— Acts 13:48 (KJV)

Holiness is not the cause but the design of election.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,

that we should be holy."
— Ephesians 1:4 (KJV)

Good works follow after election.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."
— Ephesians 2:10 (KJV)

4. ELECTION MADE IN CHRIST

The act of election was made in Christ, who is the head of the elect.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."
— Ephesians 1:4 (KJV)

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation."
— 2 Thessalonians 2:13 (KJV)

5. CHOSEN UNTO SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS AND GLORY

Those who are chosen are chosen unto grace here and glory hereafter.

"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."
— 1 Thessalonians 5:9 (KJV)

6. PREDESTINATION INCLUDES THE MEANS AND THE END

Both the means and the end are secured by the eternal decree of God.

"Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."
— Romans 8:30 (KJV)

7. THE ULTIMATE END OF PREDESTINATION

The ultimate end of predestination is the glory of God.

"To the praise of the glory of his grace."
— Ephesians 1:6 (KJV)

II. REPROBATION

Reprobation is that eternal decree of God whereby, according to his sovereign will, he has determined to leave some men in the fallen mass of mankind and to punish them for their sins with everlasting destruction for the glory of his justice.

PRETERITION

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."
— Romans 11:7 (KJV)
"Whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world."
— Revelation 13:8 (KJV)

PRE-DAMNATION

"The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."
— Proverbs 16:4 (KJV)

THE END OF REPROBATION

"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."
— Romans 9:22 (KJV)

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of predestination, when rightly understood, magnifies the sovereignty of God and the riches of his grace. Salvation is entirely of the Lord and all glory belongs to him alone.

REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS RAISED AGAINST THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

The doctrine of predestination, as stated from the Scriptures, has long been the subject of controversy within the Christian church. Some have opposed it as inconsistent with the goodness and justice of God, while others have misunderstood it through careless expres-

sions or philosophical speculation.

It therefore becomes necessary to consider the principal objections raised against this doctrine and to examine whether they are supported by the testimony of Scripture.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF REPROBATION NOT CONTRARY TO THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD

The doctrine of reprobation, when properly understood, contains nothing that is contrary to the nature or perfections of God.

Some writers have used harsh or unguarded expressions when discussing this subject, and such language has sometimes caused offence or misunderstanding. Yet the doctrine itself, when stated carefully according to the Scriptures, is no more unreasonable than the doctrine of election.

The Scriptures speak more frequently of election than of reprobation, and therefore the latter is often understood by implication from the former. Nevertheless, the sacred writings provide sufficient evidence for both.

Because of the solemn nature of this subject, it is often wise not to dwell excessively upon it in public discourse. The doctrine of election itself provides the principal testimony concerning the sovereignty of God in salvation.

Opponents of the doctrine, however, frequently begin their attack upon the subject of reprobation, believing that by making it appear harsh they may bring the doctrine of election into disrepute.

Yet this approach begins with the wrong foundation. Reprobation is nothing more than the logical counterpart of election. If some are chosen, others must necessarily be passed by.
Thus if the doctrine of election stands, the doctrine of reprobation follows by necessary consequence.

II. OBJECTIONS DRAWN FROM CERTAIN PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

Some object to the doctrine of predestination by appealing to various passages of Scripture which they believe cannot be reconciled with it.

Among these passages are those which speak of the justice of God, the responsibility of man, and the call to repentance.

However, a careful examination of these texts shows that none of them contradict the doctrine of predestination when they are properly understood in their context.

For example, certain passages describe the providential dealings of God with nations or individuals in temporal matters rather than in matters concerning eternal salvation.

Other passages describe the revealed will of God in the preaching of the Gospel rather than his secret and eternal decree.

It is therefore important to distinguish between these two aspects of the divine will:

The secret will of God, which concerns his eternal decree.
The revealed will of God, which concerns the commands and invitations given in the Gospel.

Confusion between these two often leads to misunderstanding.

III. PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF GOD'S WILL THAT ALL SHOULD BE SAVED

Another objection arises from those Scriptures which declare that God is willing that all should be saved.

Peter 3:9 (KJV)

These passages, however, do not teach that every individual person without exception will be saved. Rather they indicate that salvation is not confined to one nation or class of people.

The Gospel is proclaimed to all kinds of men, both Jews and Gentiles, rulers and subjects, rich and poor.

Thus these Scriptures demonstrate the universality of the Gospel invitation, not the universality of election.

IV. PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF CHRIST DYING FOR THE WORLD

Others appeal to passages that declare Christ died for the world.

Such expressions must be understood according to the usage of Scripture. The word world is often used to describe mankind generally or the Gentile nations in contrast to Israel.

Thus the meaning is not that Christ died equally for every individual person, but that his sacrifice is sufficient for people from every nation, tribe, and language.

V. THE JUSTICE OF GOD VINDICATED

Some object that the doctrine of predestination is inconsistent with the justice of God.

Yet this objection arises from a misunderstanding.

In the decree of preterition, God simply leaves men as they are in their fallen condition. He does not force them into sin nor prevent them from doing what is right.
In the decree of condemnation, men are punished not arbitrarily but for their sins.

If God were to condemn all men for sin, he would still be perfectly

just. Therefore it cannot be unjust for him to save some while leaving others to the consequences of their rebellion.

VI. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN SALVATION

The Scriptures consistently present salvation as the work of God's sovereign grace.

Thus the doctrine of predestination exalts the grace of God while preserving the responsibility of man.

CONCLUSION OF THE REPLY

When the Scriptures are carefully examined, the objections raised against the doctrine of predestination lose their force.

The doctrine does not diminish the goodness or justice of God. Rather it magnifies the wisdom of his eternal purpose and the riches of his grace toward those who are saved through Jesus Christ.

The believer therefore finds comfort in the assurance that salvation rests not upon the uncertainty of human effort but upon the unchangeable purpose of God.

A REPLY TO MR. WESLEY'S PARTICULAR OBJECTIONS

Having stated the doctrine of predestination from the Scriptures, and considered the general objections raised against it, we now proceed to examine more particularly the exceptions brought forward by Mr. Wesley in his discourse entitled *Predestination Calmly Considered*.

It must be observed at the outset that Mr. Wesley does not directly address the principal arguments advanced in defence of the doctrine. Instead, he raises various objections drawn from selected passages of Scripture and from philosophical reflections upon the character of God.

Our purpose here is not to engage in rhetorical dispute, but to examine these objections in the light of Scripture and sound reasoning.

I. ON THE CHARGE THAT PREDESTINATION MAKES GOD THE AUTHOR OF SIN

One of the most common accusations made against the doctrine of predestination is that it represents God as the author of sin.

This accusation arises from a misunderstanding of the doctrine. The decree of God establishes what shall certainly come to pass, yet it does not remove the moral responsibility of human beings.

Scripture clearly teaches that God is holy and cannot be the author of sin.

James 1:13 (KJV)

Sin proceeds from the corruption of the human heart. God permits it within his providence, but the guilt of it belongs entirely to the creature.

Thus the decree of God establishes the certainty of events, while the sinful intentions of men remain their own.

II. ON THE CHARGE THAT PREDESTINATION DESTROYS HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

Another objection frequently raised is that the doctrine of predestination destroys the responsibility of man.

Yet the Scriptures consistently hold together both truths: the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man.

Men are commanded to repent, believe the Gospel, and obey the commandments of God.

Acts 17:30 (KJV)

The fact that God has an eternal purpose does not remove the obligation of men to respond to the call of the Gospel.

Indeed, the preaching of the Gospel is the very means appointed by God for bringing his elect to faith.

III. ON THE CHARGE THAT PREDESTINATION DISCOURAGES HOLINESS

It is sometimes alleged that the doctrine of predestination encourages carelessness in moral conduct.

This accusation likewise misunderstands the doctrine. The Scriptures teach that those who are chosen by God are also chosen unto holiness, a livng right before the Lord.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him
Ephesians 1:4 (KJV)

Election therefore does not weaken the pursuit of holiness; rather, it establishes it as the purpose of God's saving work.

Those who truly understand the grace of God are moved not to indifference but to gratitude and obedience.

IV. ON THE COMFORT PROVIDED BY THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

Far from being a discouraging doctrine, predestination provides strong consolation for believers.

It assures them that their salvation does not depend upon their own unstable efforts but upon the unchangeable purpose of God.

Romans 8:29 (KJV)

Because God's purpose cannot fail, the believer may rest in the certainty that the work begun in grace will be completed in glory.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in

you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ
Philippians 1:6 (KJV)

CONCLUSION

When carefully considered, the objections raised against the doctrine of predestination do not overturn the clear teaching of Scripture.

Instead, the doctrine reveals the depth of God's wisdom, the sovereignty of his grace, and the certainty of his saving purpose.

It humbles the pride of man, exalts the mercy of God, and directs all glory to the Lord alone.

A FINAL VINDICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

Having considered the principal objections raised against the doctrine of predestination, and having replied to the particular arguments advanced by its opponents, it remains to offer a concluding vindication of this important doctrine as it is revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

I. THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE

The doctrine of predestination is not derived from philosophical speculation, but from the clear testimony of the Word of God. Throughout the Scriptures we find repeated references to God's eternal purpose in the salvation of his people.

Ephesians 1:4 (KJV)

'Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he als
Romans 8:30 (KJV)

These passages plainly teach that salvation proceeds according to the

eternal purpose of God and not according to the uncertain will or works of man.

II. THE HARMONY OF DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

Some have imagined that the doctrine of predestination is inconsistent with the goodness or justice of God. Yet when rightly understood, it harmonizes perfectly with all the divine attributes.

God's justice is displayed in the punishment of sin. His mercy is displayed in the salvation of sinners. His wisdom is seen in the perfect ordering of all things according to his eternal counsel.

Thus the doctrine does not diminish the character of God but rather reveals the depth and glory of his divine government.

III. THE HUMBLING OF HUMAN PRIDE

Another important effect of this doctrine is that it humbles the pride of man. If salvation depended upon human wisdom or merit, then man might boast before God.
But the Scriptures declare:

1 Corinthians 1:29 (KJV)

All who are saved must therefore acknowledge that salvation is entirely the work of divine grace.

IV. THE COMFORT OF BELIEVERS

The doctrine of predestination provides great comfort and assurance to the people of God. Because salvation rests upon God's eternal purpose, it cannot ultimately fail.

Romans 8:35 (KJV)

Believers may therefore trust that the God who began the work of

salvation will bring it to completion.

Philippians 1:6 (KJV)

V. THE PROPER USE OF THE DOCTRINE

This doctrine must be handled with reverence and humility. It was not given to encourage speculation or dispute, but to lead believers to greater trust in God and deeper gratitude for his grace.

When rightly understood, predestination encourages holiness, perseverance, and humble dependence upon the Lord.

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of predestination, therefore, stands firmly upon the authority of Scripture. Though often opposed or misunderstood, it remains a testimony to the sovereignty of God and the riches of his grace.

Let all who consider these things remember the words of the apostle:

Romans 11:33 (KJV)

To him alone be glory for ever. Amen.

APPENDIX A
KEY SCRIPTURES ON PREDESTINATION, ELECTION, AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The following passages of Holy Scripture are frequently cited in discussions concerning the doctrine of predestination, election, and the sovereign grace of God in salvation. These texts are provided for study, meditation, and teaching.

PREDESTINATION

Romans 8:29-30 (KJV)

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Ephesians 1:5 (KJV)

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

ELECTION

Ephesians 1:4 (KJV)

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

2 Thessalonians 2:13 (KJV)

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Daniel 4:35 (KJV)

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

Isaiah 46:9-10 (KJV)

"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

John 10:28-29 (KJV)

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Philippians 1:6 (KJV)

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

CLOSING REFLECTION

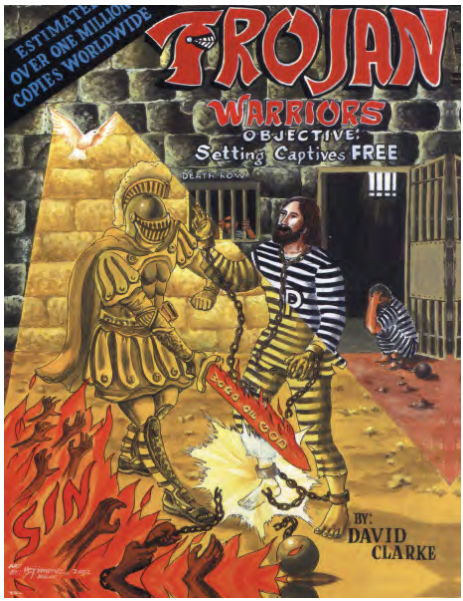
These passages demonstrate that the doctrine of predestination is not built upon isolated texts but upon the consistent testimony of Scripture. The eternal purpose of God in Christ is revealed from Genesis to Revelation and forms part of the foundation of the Christian understanding of salvation by grace.

Romans 11:36 (KJV)

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

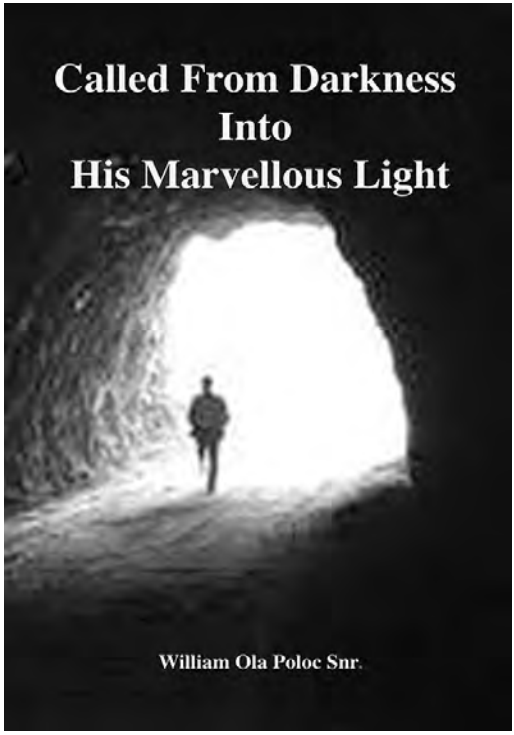
TROJAN WARRIORS



Setting Captives Free. Trojan Warriors is a true story of two brothers, Michael and David Clarke, who are brought up in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England. They became criminals in the 60's and were sent to prison for malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license, in 1967. They both turned from their lives of crimes in remarkable ways but some 25 years apart, and then they worked together helping other prison inmates, on their own roads of reformation. David the younger brother became a Christian, after a bad experience on LSD, in 1970, and then went on to educate himself and then on to Higher Education. He became a baptist minister and taught electronics for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education. Michael however remained untouched and continued his flamboyant life style ending up serving a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996, where he died of tuberculosis in 2005. When David heard the news of his brothers arrest on an ITN television news bulletin he felt compelled to wrote their story. And then when he heard of his own brothers conversion from crime to Christ, after serving 5 year of his sentence, he published

their story in his book, "Converted on LS Trip", and directed a mission of help to the Philippines to assist his brother. This book tells the story of this mission. They then worked together with many former notorious criminals, who were inmates in New Bilibid Prison, who too had become Christians and turned their lives around. This help was to train them to become preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ . This book contains the 66 testimonies of some of these men who convicted former criminals, incarcerated in New Bilibid Prison. They are the, "Trojan Warriors", who had turned their lives around and from crime to Christ. Twenty two of these testimonies are men who are on Death Row scheduled to be executed by lethal injection. Revelation 12 verse 11: And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death.

CALLED FROM DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELLOUS LIGHT



William Poloc

William Poloc was a prisoner in New Bilibid Prison and served a

period of 14 years for a crime of homicide. During his imprisonment he was called by the Lord Jesus to follow him and he turned his back on his criminal past. He read the bible and studied theology and he learned and understood the doctrines of grace and became a teacher of the gospel I met William in New Bilibid Prison, in October 2001, as I was the Director of a Christian Mission called Trojan Horse International.

In August 2002 William was released from prison and Trojan Horse International commissioned and sent William, on his release to go to his home city in Baguio and preach the Gospel to inmates of Baguio City Jail and Benguet Provincial Jail.

In October, 2002 I visited Baguio City Jail, as the mission director and a sent minister of Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists, and baptized 22 inmates, who had been converted from crime to Christ, through the ministry of William Poloc. I also baptized 8 souls in Benguet Provincial jail who too had been converted from crime to Christ, though the ministry of William Poloc. These events took place was at the same time that the Bierton Strict Baptist Chapel held its last worship service, in the United Kingdom, which was on the 22nd December. 2002.

William, as his testimony will tell, has worked these past 20 years preaching and teaching the gospel and founded Baguio Christ Centred Churches. And we praise God for being able to tell of the wonderful works of God in saving sinners, in and though faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

David Clarke
Director of Trojan Horse International
April 2022